

D525

m253

McCurdy,

To Restore

Command

1320

TO RESTORE THE
TEN COMMANDMENTS

THE BASIS OF A PERMANENT
PEACE FOR EUROPE



Elliot and Fry.

By
CHARLES A. McCURDY, M.P.

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

PRICE ONE PENNY

BY THE BOARD
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
HOOPER WAR LIBRARY
1923:



1320

W. H. D. 30 Jan 24

PERMANENT PEACE

I READ the other day the report of the doings
of a German doctor and a German prince.

Professor Dr. Max Henkel, director of the women's clinic at the University of Jena, has been the subject of "disciplinary proceedings" in Germany, whatever that may mean, for performing operations in his hospital for which there was no cause. It was proved that to amuse a Prince of Lippe a woman patient was brought into the operating theatre. She had just breakfasted, and as under those conditions chloroform would be sure to make her very sick and so interfere with the surgeon's work, a stomach-pump was applied, and a wholly unnecessary operation was then performed to divert the royal visitor.

The woman died half-an-hour after the operation. Evidence was given by assistants that the Professor had performed many other operations on healthy pregnant women, some of whom had died.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Now, this report illustrates one very important fact which we ought to understand, if we are to find a safe and honourable end to this war.

German civilisation is a civilisation different from ours. I do not say that it is better, or worse. It is different. Germany puts the State first and the individual a poor second. The people exist for the benefit of the State—to be used as gun-fodder, if possible, or in any other way the State may require. If the gun-fodder runs short the State takes steps to encourage breeding. The State is everything, the life of the individual is nothing—a pawn—a plaything for princes. In our country Professor Henkel would not be subjected to “disciplinary proceedings.” He would be hanged.

THE BLACK DEATH.

We regard war as an evil. The Germans regard war as a good and wholesome thing, a “biological necessity,” a “divine institution.” The killing of civilians—even in war—we regard as wrong. The Germans regard it as right and they practise it as a legitimate thing, and are in fact killing civilians on our merchant ships day by day at the present time.

The plagues that devastated Europe in the Middle Ages, the Black Death that we read of in history, left behind them no memories so terrible as the German

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

armies will leave in Belgium and Northern France. The committee appointed by the British Government to report on the German outrages in Belgium—a committee which included Lord Bryce, Sir Frederick Pollock, and Sir Edward Clarke—reported that “murder, lust, and pillage prevailed over many parts of Belgium on a scale unparalleled in any war between civilised nations during the last three centuries. . . . There were in many parts of Belgium deliberate and systematically organised massacres of the civil population. . . . Innocent civilians, both men and women, were murdered in large numbers, women violated, and children murdered.”

THE DEVIL'S COMMANDMENTS.

Many people are unable to read the horrible details of the committee's report—the raping of women in public places, the bayoneting and crucifixion of little children, the murder of the aged, the crippled, and the infirm.

But we ought not to close our eyes to truth, however horrible.

By far the most important fact about the outrages committed by the German soldiers in Belgium is not that things were done which we regard as cruel and wicked, but that the soldiers only carried out, for the most part, the orders of the higher military command.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The report of the British committee is very clear on this point. They find that

“The excesses committed in Belgium were too widespread and too uniform in their character to be mere sporadic outbursts of passion. . . . The discipline of the German Army is proverbially stringent, and its obedience implicit. It was to the discipline rather than the want of discipline in the German Army that these outrages, which we are obliged to describe as systematic, were due. . . . ‘I am merely executing orders, and I should be shot if I did not execute them,’ said a German officer to a witness at Louvain. At Brussels another officer said: ‘I have not done one-hundredth part of what we have been ordered to do by the High German Military Authorities.’ ”

Every people has its criminals; every nation has at some time in its history done evil. But the Germans stand alone among the civilised nations of to-day as a people who have been taught to regard as right what other peoples regard as wrong. Other peoples are taught from infancy that it is wrong to kill your neighbour and take his house and goods; the German people have been taught for the last fifty years that it is **not** wrong, but natural and right, for the German people to kill their neighbours and take their goods and territories for the expansion of the German Empire and the glory of the German State. The whole people are trained to observe, not the Ten

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Commandments, but a new set of Commandments—the Commandments, not of God, but of the devil :

Thou Shalt Kill.

“ War is a biological necessity,” says General Bernhardt. “ I warn you against pity,” says Nietzsche.

Thou Shalt Steal.

“ Every great people,” says Professor Wagner, “ needs new territory: it must expand over foreign soil; it must expel the foreigners by the power of the sword.” Or as a German general, Von Wrothem, puts it, “ A developing people like ourselves requires new land for its energies, and if peace will not secure it then only war remains.”

Thou Shalt Covet Thy Neighbour's Goods.

“ We must establish ourselves firmly at Antwerp on the North Sea, and at Riga on the Baltic.”—Professor Haeckel.

THE GERMAN HEAVEN.

There are war-lovers and jingoes in every country, but only in Germany is a whole people drilled and educated from childhood to believe that war is a divine institution—that it is the holy duty and destiny of the German people to enlarge their boundaries by making war upon their neighbours.

No other European nation preaches war as a religion and pillage as a means of livelihood.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

I have before me an extract from a German weekly paper written for the instruction of youth :

“ Let us laugh with all our lungs at the old women in trousers who are afraid of war and therefore complain that it is cruel and hideous. No ; war is beautiful. . . . For us, too, the great joyful hour of battle will one day strike. . . . Still and deep in the German heart must the joy in war and the longing for war endure.”

And here is another from the same periodical :

“ When here on earth a battle is won by German arms and the faithful dead ascend to Heaven, a Potsdam lance-corporal will call the guard to the door, and ‘ Old Fritz,’ springing from his golden throne, will give the command to present arms. That is the Heaven of young Germany.”*

THE “IMMORALITY” OF PEACE.

That is the way in which it is put to the German boys and girls, but those who write for grown-up people put it still plainer. The great German philosopher Nietzsche says :

“ We children of the future . . . do not by any means think it desirable that the kingdom of righteousness and peace should be established on the earth. . . . We rejoice in all men who, like ourselves, love danger, war, and adventure.”

* From “501 Gems of German Thought,” published by T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., to which I am indebted for many valuable references to German writers.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Bernhardi, the German military writer, formerly a member of the General Staff, says :

“The efforts directed towards the abolition of war must not only be termed foolish, but *absolutely immoral*, and must be stigmatised as *unworthy of the human race*. . . . Is the weak nation to have the same right to live as the powerful and vigorous nation? The whole idea represents a presumptuous encroachment on the natural laws of development.”

In other words—Germany’s weaker neighbours have no right to live; it is immoral to save them from being destroyed by the powerful and vigorous Germans.

“Perpetual peace,” said Count von Moltke in 1880, “is a dream, and not a beautiful one at that: war forms part of the eternal order instituted by God.”

WAR AS A RELIGION.

The German God is certainly not the God of the Christians, as Bernhardi himself recognises :

“Christian morality is based, indeed, on the law of Love. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbour as thyself.’ This law can claim no significance for the relations of one country with another.”—Bernhardi’s *Germany and the Next War*.

“War,” says Professor Burekhardt, “is held to be a divine institution. . . . Not for nothing do the Indians worship Siva the

Destroyer; the warrior is filled with the enthusiasm of destruction; wars purify the atmosphere like thunderstorms. We may here refer to H. Leo's phrase as to the 'fresh and joyous war that shall sweep away the scrofulous rabble.' "

By "scrofulous rabble" he means the French, the Russians, ourselves, and any other peoples who stand in the way of Germany's ambitions.

Bernhardi crosses the *t*'s and dots the *i*'s :

"We must settle our account with France if we want a free hand in international policy. . . . France must be so completely crushed that she can never cross our path again."

Not that the Germans are incapable of preaching peace if it suits their purpose. As Nietzsche has said :

"Ye shall love peace *as a means to new wars*—and the short peace more than the long."

CRUELTY AS A CREED.

The plain unpleasant fact which we have to face is the fact that in Germany we have a State which regards war as a national career, which devotes itself to preparing for war, and cares no more for the rights of other nations than Professor Henkel cared for the poor woman whom he butchered for the amusement of a German prince. The cruelty and sufferings which the war has brought on Europe only add zest to the slaughter.

"Over the blood of the fallen," says Professor Kuhn, writing on this war, "glows the flame of

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

poetic enthusiasm. A war without dead and wounded is a life without work, without aim, and without hope."

And not only does Germany believe in war, preach war, and practise what she preaches; she regards terrorism, outrage, and atrocity as right and proper methods of conducting war.

Nietzsche has explained how the responsibility for atrocities disappears—if one person orders them and another carries them out. Here is the passage :

"Much that is dreadful and inhuman in history . . . is mitigated by the thought that the one who commands and the one who executes the commands are different persons—the former does not see what is done and is therefore not unpleasantly affected; the latter obeys a superior and therefore feels no responsibility."

THE DOCTRINE OF MILITARY NECESSITY.

This is devil's doctrine—but it finds abundant support in Germany.

General von Hartmann, writing on "military necessity," says :

"It is a gratuitous illusion to suppose that modern war does not demand far more brutality . . . than was formerly the case. . . . The enemy State must not be spared the want and wretchedness of war."

"We hold," says Nietzsche, "that hardness, violence, slavery . . . and devilry of all kinds—everything evil, terrible, tyrannical,

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

wild-beast-like, and serpent-like in man—contribute to the elevation of the species.”

“Whenever a national war breaks out,” says General von Hartmann, “terrorism becomes a necessary military principle.”

The doctrine of military necessity is not only a doctrine of the German military authorities, it is also preached from German pulpits. In a series of pamphlets published since the war by professors of the University of Berlin is one by Pastor Baumgarten, who says :

“Whoever cannot prevail upon himself to approve from the bottom of his heart the sinking of the *Lusitania*, whoever cannot subdue his sense of the gigantic cruelty to unnumbered innocent victims and give himself up to honest delight at this victorious exploit of German defensive power—him we judge to be no true German.”

How the honest pastor must have rejoiced when he read the story of the *Belgian Prince* and the victorious exploit of the German sailors who stripped defenceless men of their lifebelts and then plunged them into an icy sea !

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE.

Some good people think that our armies in Flanders are fighting to win a few miles of blood-soaked land ; others look a little farther and think that we are fighting to restore Belgium or to save

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

the remnants of the unhappy Serbian people. But the issues of this war are not so simple.

It is not enough to capture German trenches, to conquer the German armies and restore Belgium and Serbia and other occupied countries; we have to find some security that our work will endure, that Belgium once restored will not in a few years' time have to be restored again.

We want to see not only Belgium restored but the Ten Commandments restored—the ancient Tables of Stone—the Laws of our common humanity, which Germany has shattered in this war.

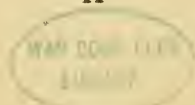
So long as official Germany recognises no laws, human or divine, except her own necessities or desires, there can be no peaceful life for Europe any more. The German view was clearly put by a German philosopher, Max Stirner:

“What does right matter to me? I have no need of it. What I can acquire by force that I possess and enjoy. . . . I have the right to do what I have the power to do.”

“Might,” says Bernhardi, “is the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right is decided by the arbitrament of war. War gives a biologically just decision.”

This is the Law of the Jungle—the strong may prey upon the weak, and no one shall say them Nay!

There can be no sort of security for small nations or for great, no peace for the world, until this doctrine is dethroned. There can be no international law, no



TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

treaties, no honour among nations so long as Germany preaches and practises the Law of the Jungle.

Good, kind people in this country suggest that we should meet the German rulers at a conference, negotiate with the Hohenzollerns, and settle matters by a treaty.

But the Law of the Jungle knows no treaties, respects no conferences. Von Treitschke has expressed the German view of treaties quite honestly and quite plainly :

“No State can pledge its future to another. . . . Every sovereign State has the undoubted right to declare war at its pleasure, and is consequently entitled to repudiate its treaties.”

How could we rely for safety upon a treaty made with a State which does not hesitate, and has never hesitated, to act upon that doctrine?

“A pacific agreement with England is a thing which no serious statesman would trouble to follow,” says General von Bernhardt in “Germany and the Next War.”

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The men who have preached war and planned war for forty years are still in power in Germany; they are still believers in their abominable creed, and they are still most actively engaged in putting it into practice.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

If we stopped fighting now we should have to prepare, with all the energy of which we are capable, to defend ourselves against the next attack; and no one can say under what conditions the next attack would be made. To-day nearly the whole world is on our side. The next war we might have to fight alone.

We cannot safely lay down our arms and dissolve the grand alliance of free nations, though Germany should offer to make any treaty of peace that could be suggested, until Germany is disarmed.

Germany is too great and powerful for the safety of her neighbours so long as she has the will and the means to use her greatness and her power for their destruction. We must disarm Germany, substitute Right for Might in the settlement of any questions that may arise between Germany and her smaller neighbours, bury the Law of the Jungle, and restore the Ten Commandments as rules of civilised life for Europe.

A LEAGUE OF PEACE.

It is a hard and difficult task, but it can be done. It must be done if Christianity and civilisation are to survive this war.

We must not only defeat Germany: we must discredit and abolish war. We must not only disarm Germany: we must find a basis for Peace that will enable us to disarm ourselves.

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

President Wilson has already pointed out a way—the formation of a League of Nations pledged to submit to a court of justice their own differences and disputes; ready to receive on equal terms all nations willing to join them in the task of preventing wars; resolved by every means in their power to secure and maintain peace among the nations and goodwill among all the peoples of the earth.

The materials for such a league are ready to hand. If all the nations now allied against Germany undertake here and now the formation of a world-wide partnership bound together in a League of Peace, though this war will still have to be finished, we can make the world safe, so far as is humanly possible, against any more wars in our lifetime or the lifetime of our children's children.

We can fashion for Justice a weapon mightier than the sword, more terrible than artillery—the weapon of world boycott against any future disturbers of the world's peace.

We can close to war-makers the harbours of every sea, the markets of every continent in the world. The conquest of Serbia, the annexation of Belgium, of French or German provinces would be dearly bought by Germany at the price of exclusion from the great continents beyond the seas.

No commercial nation could afford to maintain great armies and navies at the cost of exclusion from the markets of America, Asia, and Africa. No

TO RESTORE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

belligerent nation could hope to recover from the economic waste and ruin of this war if it was unable to find seaports open to its traders or to obtain the raw materials essential for its industries.

UNTIL THE DAY DAWNS.

It is no mean or selfish aim that the Allies are pursuing in this war. We are not seeking to annex German territory, to despoil the German people, or to exact vengeance for German crimes. We are seeking to abolish the causes which led to this war, which have led to so many wars in the past, in order that the future generations of English, French, Germans, and all the other peoples of the world may never know the horrors of war again.

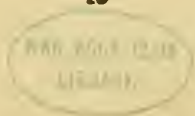
It is a great purpose not soon or easily to be performed.

But terrible as has been the price we have already paid in human lives and suffering, we cannot falter on the only path that promises deliverance.

If from any weariness of soul, or infirmity of spirit, or in any hour of doubt, we were to abandon our task, we might for ourselves gain an easy peace; but we should be leaving to our children a heritage of wars more cruel, of burdens yet more difficult to bear.

We shall not so greatly betray the future of our race.

Until the day dawns—however long the night—we shall fight on.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 547 870 1